

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing, re-examination and reconsideration of the subject matter identified in caption, as amended, in light of the remarks which follow, are respectfully requested.

In the present Amendment, claims 7 and 8 have been amended to depend from claim 6. Claims 13 and 14 have been amended to further recite that the at least one conjugated diene comprises butadiene. These amendments are supported by the specification, for example, page 1, line 12. Claims 16 and 26 have been amended to depend from claim 15. Claim 30 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 34. Further, new claims 44-51 have been added. New claims 44-48 correspond to claims 7-11, respectively, and depend from claim 40, directly or indirectly. New claim 49 corresponds to claim 26 and depends from claim 24. New claims 50 and 51 correspond to claims 32 and 33, respectively, and depend from claim 30. Claims 1-5 have been canceled. Claims 27 and 28 were previously canceled.

Upon entry of the Amendment, claims 6-26 and 29-51 will be all the claims pending in the application.

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 6, 12, 15, 19-22, 24, 25, 29, 31-35, 37 and 39-43 are allowed.

I. Response to Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 35 U.S.C. §§ 102/103

a. Claims 1-5, 7-11, 13, 14, 16-18, 23 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,894,425 to Hellermann et al.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-5 is moot because claims 1-5 have been canceled.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 7-11, 13, 14, 16-18, 23 and 26 as amended are novel and patentable over Hellermann et al. for at least the following reasons.

Claims 7-11 have been amended to depend from allowed claim 6. Claims 16 and 26 have been amended to depend from allowed claim 15. Claims 17 and 18 depend from claim 16. Therefore, claims 7-11, 16-18 and 26 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Claims 13 and 14 recite a process for the production of a linear or branched diene elastomer resulting from at least one conjugated diene comprising butadiene. On the other hand, Hellermann et al. is relied upon as teaching a process for the preparation of polyisoprene, which is different from polybutadiene.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims are not anticipated or rendered obvious by Hellermann et al. and thus the rejection should be withdrawn.

b. Claims 30, 36 and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,316,820 to Wieder et al.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 30, 36 and 38 as amended are novel and patentable over Wieder et al. at least for the reason that claim 30, from which claims 36 and 38 depend, directly or indirectly, has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowed claim 34. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection.

II. New Claims

New claims 44-48 depend from allowed claim 40. New claim 49 depends from allowed claim 24. New claims 50 and 51 depend from claim 30, which, as indicated above, has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowed claim 34. Thus, Applicants respectfully

submit that new claims 44-51 are patentable over the cited references at least by virtue of their dependency.

III. Conclusion

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order and such action is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (202) 452-7932 at his earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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